

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 STATE 123102
ORIGIN DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-04
NSC-05 SS-15 L-03 /082 R

DRAFTED BY D/HA/HR:KHILL
APPROVED BY NEA/AFN:WSWEISLOGEL
NEA/RA:SHOLLY (DRAFT)
NEA/AFN:TSWILKINSON
-----280720Z 107568 /14
R 271634Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 123102

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SHUM, PFOR, PINT, TS

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: BEN AMMAR'S MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON

REF: STATE 108767

1. HASSIB BEN AMMAR AND BEN JAFFAR TWICE MET WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS DURING THEIR RECENT VISITS TO WASHINGTON. ON BOTH OCCASIONS THE TUNISIANS ATTEMPTED TO PORTRAY THEIR EFFORTS AS CONSISTENT WITH U.S. GOAL TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCE ON A WORLDWIDE BASIS.

2. BEN AMMAR CONTACTED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS THROUGH AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 123102

ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND ARRANGED A LUNCH MEETING MAY 12 OUTSIDE THE BUILDING. HE DESCRIBED PRIMARY GOALS OF COMMITTEE SPONSORING HIS TRAVEL AS AVERTING POLITICAL AND SOCIAL UNREST IN TUNISIA SUCH AS LED TO THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON. BEN AMMAR CONCEDED THAT BOURGUIBA REGIME HAD DONE MUCH TO FOSTER SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND THAT TUNISIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IS BETTER THAN IN MANY COUNTRIES OF THE THIRD

WORLD, BUT EXPRESSED FEAR THAT CERTAIN REPRESSIVE POLICIES OF THE REGIME HAD INHIBITED CHANGE AND COULD CAUSE A BUILD-UP OF PRESSURE WHICH WOULD ULTIMATELY CAUSE AN EXPLOSION IF IT WERE NOT RELIEVED.

3. BEN AMMAR STATED THAT PUBLIC LIBERTIES CONFERENCE WHICH IS TO MEET ON JUNE 10 WILL FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN FIVE AREAS: FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS (I.E., MORE DEMOCRATIC ELECTION PROCEDURES); ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY; PROTECTION OF THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON; FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION; FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY. HE SAID THE CONFERENCE WILL BE A SUCCESS IF, PRIOR TO THE MEETING, PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA ALLOWS IT TO MEET LEGALLY, PERMITS BEN AMMAR TO PUBLISH A PERIODICAL WHICH HERETOFORE TUNISIAN OFFICIALS HAVE THWARTED, AND TAKES STEPS TOWARD PROCLAIMING A GENERAL AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS.

4. BEN AMMAR SAID HE EXPECTED THE CONFERENCE TO SET UP A STANDING COUNCIL TO OBSERVE HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN TUNISIA. HE STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THAT HIS GROUP IS NOT CONSPIRATORIAL, VIOLENT OR ILLEGAL, AND IS ONLY "POLITICAL" IN THE SENSE THAT IT SEEKS STRICTER OBSERVANCE OF TUNISIA'S CONSTITUTION AND LAWS, AS WOULD BE EXPECTED IN ANY MODERATE, WESTERN-ORIENTED SOCIETY.

5. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS THANKED BEN AMMAR FOR HIS BRIEFING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN TUNISIA AND REAFFIRMED THE USG'S COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 123102

VANCE.

6. IN AN ASIDE TO DESK OFFICER WILKINSON ON MAY 12, BEN AMMAR REGRETTED THAT NO ADVANCE ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO HAVE HIM RECEIVED BY USG AT A HIGH LEVEL. HE HAD NOT EXPECTED THIS IN U.K. AND FRANCE, BUT U.S. WAS DIFFERENT BECAUSE OF ITS PUBLIC EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS. HE QUESTIONED WHETHER U.S. POLICY WOULD BE SEEN AS SINCERE IN THIRD WORLD, PARTICULARLY ARAB COUNTRIES AND AFRICA, IF WE DID NOT MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO HEAR OUT HUMAN RIGHTS LEADERS AT A HIGH LEVEL WHEN THEY VISITED WASHINGTON.

7. IN LIGHT OF THIS COMMENT, BEN AMMAR WAS INVITED TO CALL ON DEPUTY COORDINATOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS MAY 13, WHO BRIEFED HIM ON USG'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES. BEN AMMAR'S PRESENTATION AND DEPTOFF'S RESPONSES WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF EARLIER MEETING.

VANCE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE123102
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: KHILL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770191-0544
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977058/aaaaagsn.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b0854698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN DHA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 108767
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2600696
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS: BEN AMMARI'S MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, OVIP, TS, US, (BEN AMMAR, HASSIB), (JAFFAR, BEN)
To: TUNIS GENEVA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b0854698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009